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ABSTRACT

This report provides a summary of K-12 educational services offered by Corporation for Public Broadcasting-supported television stations from CPB's annual Station Activities Survey. Stations are broken into cohorts by license type and budget size. The 1997 Station Activities Survey asked public television stations whether they provided instructional programming to elementary or secondary schools or other educational institutions during the 1995-96 academic year, and if so, what means were used to deliver the programs to schools. A total of 81% (144) of all stations provided programming to elementary schools, and nearly as many (79%) provided programming to secondary schools. The most popular means of delivery was the full-power broadcast channel. Public television stations reported providing instructional programming to a median of 39 school districts, 289 school buildings, and 6,000 teachers. The most popular services provided to schools were advance schedules of general audience and instructional programming, and previews of instructional programs. About half of all large stations and institutional licensees offered interactive distance education. Over half of all stations (52%) offered a General Equivalency Degree (GED) program. Stations reported a median of 200 GED enrollees, with enrollment at all stations totaling 50,861. The level of service to education by public television stations of all types is high. While large stations tend to offer more instructional services than smaller ones, very few stations provide no instructional services or programming. Five charts illustrate station information by license type and budget size: grantees offering instructional programming to schools; number of school districts, buildings, and teachers utilizing programming; grantees providing services to schools; grantees offering instructional programming to schools; and grantees offering GED programs. (SWC)

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Elementary and Secondary Educational Services of Public Television Grantees
Highlights from the 1997 Station Activities Survey

The following is a summary of a variety of K-12 educational services offered by CPB-supported television stations from CPB's annual Station Activities Survey. For analysis purposes, stations are broken into cohorts by license type and budget size.[1]

Provision of Instructional Programming to Elementary and Secondary Schools

The 1997 Station Activities Survey asked public television stations whether they provided instructional programming to elementary or secondary schools or other educational institutions during the 1995-96 academic year, and if so, what means were used to deliver the programs to schools. A total of 144, or 81 percent of all stations, provided programming to elementary schools, and nearly as many provided programming to secondary schools (141, or 79 percent of all stations; see chart I). The most popular means of delivery was the full-power broadcast channel, which was used by approximately three out of four stations that provided instructional programming. Separately programmed cable channels were used by 17 percent of stations for both elementary and secondary school programming. ITFS services were less popular, used by only 10 percent of stations to deliver elementary school programming and by 11 percent to deliver secondary school programming.

Stations with small operating budgets were somewhat less likely than average to provide programming to schools; only 71 percent of small budget stations provided

1. Institutional licensees are those licensed to colleges, universities and state and local governments. Small operating budgets are defined as under $2.5 million; medium operating budgets as $2.5 to $6.0 million; and large operating budgets as over $6.0 million. All data are reported on a licensee basis.

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elementary school programming, and 69 percent provided secondary school programming. Larger stations were somewhat more likely to deliver instructional programming via the main broadcast channel (perhaps because large stations were also much more likely than average to provide overnight block feeds of instructional programming on their main channel; see below). There were no significant changes in this area from the 1994-95 school year.

Use of Instructional Programming by Schools

Stations were asked to provide estimates of the number of school districts, buildings and teachers that used the instructional programs they provided (see chart II). Because many stations do not have exact counts available, they were encouraged to provide their best estimates; even so, about ten percent of the stations that provided programming to schools could not answer this series of questions. They have been eliminated from the analysis that follows, and the results should be interpreted with caution.

Public television stations providing programming to schools reported that a median of 39 school districts, 289 school buildings and 6,000 teachers used instructional programs they provided in Fiscal Year 1996. As might be expected, larger stations tended to serve more districts, schools and teachers than smaller stations, and many stations served schools outside their broadcast area. Institutional licensees also served slightly larger numbers. Although the number of teachers using stations' instructional programming ranged from a low of five to a high of 120,000, only sixteen stations reported serving more than 30,000 teachers.

Services to Schools

Stations were asked about a list of 11 services that they may have provided to schools during the academic year 1995-96 (see chart III). Only nine stations, or five percent of the total, reported providing no services at all to schools; the majority of those were small community licensees. The most popular services were providing advance schedules of general audience and instructional programming (provided by 81 percent and 70 percent of grantees, respectively), and previews of instructional programs, provided by 61 percent of grantees. About half of all large stations and institutional licensees (56 percent and 50 percent, respectively) offered interactive distance education. Large stations were far more likely to provide daytime and/or overnight block feeds of instructional programs to schools than smaller stations. The number of stations that offered electronic access to curriculum guides as of January, 1996, increased by almost ten percent (from 23 to 32 percent) from last year; large stations led the way in this area, with 44 percent of large institutional licensees and 46 percent of large community licensees offering electronic access.

National and Other Initiatives

Stations were asked to report on their current and planned participation in a series of educational initiatives (see chart IV). Thirty-four percent of stations reported offering PTV, The Ready to Learn Service on PBS in Fiscal Year 1996, and another 25 percent reported that they plan to introduce the service in FY 1997 or 1998. Other ready to learn services are more popular than PTV, with half of all stations offering them, but are growing more slowly; only 8 percent plan to begin offering a non-PTV ready to learn service in the next two fiscal years. Both types of ready to learn service are most popular among community licensees and larger licensees. In some cases, institutional licensees (especially colleges and universities) may be precluded from offering ready to learn during the day because of licensee-related programming, such as college telecourses, that are difficult to reschedule.

Seventy stations, or 39 percent of the total, reported participating in PBS' Mathline service in Fiscal Year 1996, and another 12 percent plan to begin participation in the next two fiscal years. Large institutional licensees had the highest participation rate at 47 percent.

The number of stations that reported offering instructional services on PBS Online almost doubled (from 17 percent last year to 31 percent) during Fiscal Year 1996. Another 14 percent expect to begin offering such services in FY 1997 or 1998. Thirty-three percent of small community licensees plan to introduce instructional services on PBS Online within the next two fiscal years. Fourty-two percent of stations reported offering some other computer on-line educational service besides PBS Online, and a further 17 percent plan to introduce such a service within the next two years. As with PBS Online, the biggest area of planned growth is with small community licensees (37 percent), although there was already a strong presence of such services in FY 1996 in both large community and institutional licensees (63 percent and 56 percent, respectively).

Finally, stations were asked whether they provided utilization support for teachers using technology during FY 1996. Fifty-seven percent reported offering such support, and another 10 percent plan to begin offering it within the next two years. Large stations led the way in this area, with 73 percent offering technology utilization support.

General Equivalency Degree (G.E.D.) Programs

Over half of all stations (52 percent) reported offering a General Equivalency Degree (G.E.D.) program during the 1995-96 academic year. While community licensees were slightly more likely to offer G.E.D. programs than institutional licensees (55

percent versus 49 percent), there was no clear relationship between operating budget size and the operation of a G.E.D. program. Stations that reported offering G.E.D. programs were asked to provide an estimate of the number of students enrolled. More than 22 percent of the stations that offered G.E.D. programs could not answer this question. Data from those stations have been eliminated from the analysis that follows, and the results should be interpreted with caution.

Overall, stations reported a median of 200 G.E.D. enrollees. As might be expected, the number of enrollees increases with station size, ranging from a low of 100 for small stations to a high of 500 for the largest stations. Programs at institutional licensees tended to have more enrollees, with large institutional licensees reporting a median of 650 G.E.D. students.

Enrollment at all stations totalled 50,861. Large institutional licensees accounted for more than half of the total enrollment with 28,432 students.

Conclusions

Clearly, the level of service to education by public television stations of all types is high. While large stations tend to offer more instructional services than smaller ones, very few report providing no instructional services or programming at all. Where trend data or plans for future services are available, they indicate a continued strong commitment to educational services on the part of public television stations across the country.

If you have any questions about these data, please contact Wendy Charlton at 202/879-9672, fax 202/783-1019 or e-mail wcharlton@cpb.org. We also welcome any comments and recommendations about how to make the data more useful to you.

Chart I
Highlights of Public Television Educational Activities from the Station Activities Survey
1995-96 Academic Year
Grantees Offering Instructional Programming to Schools
By License Type and Budget Size

	Community Licensees				Institutional Licensees				All Licensees			
Operating Budget Size	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Number of grantees in category	27	27	35	89	24	33	32	89	51	60	67	178
Instructional programming to elementary schools:												
No Programming	7	4	4	15	8	9	2	19	15	13	6	34
Percent of total grantees	26%	15%	11%	17%	33%	27%	6%	21%	29%	22%	9%	19%
Programming on full-power broadcast channel(s)	20	21	29	70	16	21	29	66	36	42	58	136
Percent of total grantees	74%	78%	83%	79%	67%	64%	91%	74%	71%	70%	87%	76%
Programming on separate cable channel(s)	2	5	10	17	5	6	2	13	7	11	12	30
Percent of total grantees	7%	19%	29%	19%	21%	18%	6%	15%	14%	18%	18%	17%
Programming on ITFS channel(s)	0	4	6	10	3	3	2	8	3	7	8	18
Percent of total grantees	0%	15%	17%	11%	13%	9%	6%	9%	6%	12%	12%	10%
Instructional programming to secondary schools:												
No Programming	8	6	3	17	8	9	3	20	16	15	6	37
Percent of total grantees	30%	22%	9%	19%	33%	27%	9%	22%	31%	25%	9%	21%
Programming on full-power broadcast channel(s)	19	20	30	69	16	21	28	65	35	41	58	134
Percent of total grantees	70%	74%	86%	78%	67%	64%	88%	73%	69%	68%	87%	75%
Programming on separate cable channel(s)	2	4	10	16	4	8	2	14	6	12	12	30
Percent of total grantees	7%	15%	29%	18%	17%	24%	6%	16%	12%	20%	18%	17%
Programming on ITFS channel(s)	0	4	7	11	2	4	2	8	2	8	9	19
Percent of total grantees	0%	15%	20%	12%	8%	12%	6%	9%	4%	13%	13%	11%

Note: Operating budget size is defined as follows: Small: Less than $2.5 million. Medium: $2.5 to $6.0 million. Large: Over $6.0 million.

Chart II
Highlights of Public Television Educational Activities from the Station Activities Survey
Fiscal Year 1996
Number of School Districts, Buildings and Teachers Utilizing Programming
By License Type and Budget Size

	Community Licensees				Institutional Licensees				All Licensees			
Operating Budget Size	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Number of grantees in category	27	27	35	89	24	33	32	89	51	60	67	178
Median number of school districts served	14	26	87	36	28	32	96	43	22	33	107	39
Number of grantees reporting on districts	20	23	30	73	16	23	30	69	36	46	60	142
Percent of total grantees	74%	85%	86%	82%	67%	70%	94%	78%	71%	77%	90%	80%
Median number of school buildings served	103	232	500	232	118	230	879	340	125	242	800	289
Number of grantees reporting on buildings	19	21	27	67	15	24	30	69	34	45	57	136
Percent of total grantees	70%	78%	77%	75%	63%	73%	94%	78%	67%	75%	85%	76%
Median number of teachers served	1635	5000	15000	6000	2750	5150	18000	6300	1539	7000	18538	6000
Number of grantees reporting on teachers	19	21	27	67	15	22	29	66	34	43	56	133
Percent of total grantees	70%	78%	77%	75%	63%	67%	91%	74%	67%	72%	84%	75%

Note: Operating budget size is defined as follows: Small: Less than $2.5 million. Medium: $2.5 to $6.0 million. Large: Over $6.0 million.

Chart III
Highlights of Public Television Educational Activities from the Station Activities Survey
1995-96 Academic Year
Grantees Providing Services to Schools
By License Type and Budget Size

	Community Licensees				Institutional Licensees				All Licensees			
Operating Budget Size	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Number of grantees in category	27	27	35	89	24	33	32	89	51	60	67	178
No services provided	4	0	2	6	1	2	0	3	5	2	2	9
Percent of total grantees	15%	0%	6%	7%	4%	6%	0%	3%	10%	3%	3%	5%
Previews of instructional programs	10	21	23	54	7	23	25	55	17	44	48	109
Percent of total grantees	37%	78%	66%	61%	29%	70%	78%	62%	33%	73%	72%	61%
Advance schedules of general audience programs	21	24	31	76	17	23	28	68	38	47	59	144
Percent of total grantees	78%	89%	89%	85%	71%	70%	88%	76%	75%	78%	88%	81%
Advance schedules of instructional programs	16	20	26	62	14	21	28	63	30	41	54	125
Percent of total grantees	59%	74%	74%	70%	58%	64%	88%	71%	59%	68%	81%	70%
Interactive distance education	6	9	14	29	11	16	22	49	17	25	36	78
Percent of total grantees	22%	33%	40%	33%	46%	48%	69%	55%	33%	42%	54%	44%
Tape lending library	10	8	17	35	9	11	12	32	19	19	29	67
Percent of total grantees	37%	30%	49%	39%	38%	33%	38%	36%	37%	32%	43%	38%
Tape dubbing	9	15	22	46	15	13	17	45	24	28	39	91
Percent of total grantees	33%	56%	63%	52%	63%	39%	53%	51%	47%	47%	58%	51%
Electronic access to curriculum guides	3	8	16	27	4	12	14	30	7	20	30	57
Percent of total grantees	11%	30%	46%	30%	17%	36%	44%	34%	14%	33%	45%	32%
Teacher and/or student awards programs	6	16	20	42	3	9	11	23	9	25	31	65
Percent of total grantees	22%	59%	57%	47%	13%	27%	34%	26%	18%	42%	46%	37%
Daytime block feeds of instructional programs	10	9	15	34	6	15	20	41	16	24	35	75
Percent of total grantees	37%	33%	43%	38%	25%	45%	63%	46%	31%	40%	52%	42%
Overnight feeds of instructional programs	4	11	20	35	3	10	17	30	7	21	37	65
Percent of total grantees	15%	41%	57%	39%	13%	30%	53%	34%	14%	35%	55%	37%
Other Services	6	11	12	29	0	10	10	20	6	21	22	49
Percent of total grantees	22%	41%	34%	33%	0%	30%	31%	22%	12%	35%	33%	28%

Note: Operating budget size is defined as follows: Small: Less than $2.5 million. Medium: $2.5 to $6.0 million. Large: Over $6.0 million.

Chart IV
Highlights of Public Television Educational Activities from the Station Activities Survey
Grantees Offering Instructional Programming to Schools
By License Type and Budget Size

	Community Licensees				Institutional Licensees				All Licensees			
Operating Budget Size	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Number of grantees in category	27	27	35	89	24	33	32	89	51	60	67	178
Services provided in Fiscal Year 1996:												
PTV, The Ready to Learn Service on PBS	5	12	19	36	3	9	12	24	8	21	31	60
Percent of total grantees	19%	44%	54%	40%	13%	27%	38%	27%	16%	35%	46%	34%
Other ready to learn services	12	16	24	52	9	10	18	37	21	26	42	89
Percent of total grantees	44%	59%	69%	58%	38%	30%	56%	42%	41%	43%	63%	50%
PBS Mathline	8	10	16	34	3	16	17	36	11	26	33	70
Percent of total grantees	30%	37%	46%	38%	13%	48%	53%	40%	22%	43%	49%	39%
PBS Online	5	6	15	26	4	11	15	30	9	17	30	56
Percent of total grantees	19%	22%	43%	29%	17%	33%	47%	34%	18%	28%	45%	31%
Other computer on-line educational services	5	8	22	35	9	12	18	39	14	20	40	74
Percent of total grantees	19%	30%	63%	39%	38%	36%	56%	44%	27%	33%	60%	42%
Utilization support for teachers using technology	10	16	27	53	8	19	22	49	18	35	49	102
Percent of total grantees	37%	59%	77%	60%	33%	58%	69%	55%	35%	58%	73%	57%
Services planned for Fiscal Year 1997 or 1998:												
PTV, The Ready to Learn Service on PBS	10	9	7	26	6	6	6	18	16	15	13	44
Percent of total grantees	37%	33%	20%	29%	25%	18%	19%	20%	31%	25%	19%	25%
Other ready to learn services	5	3	2	10	2	2	1	5	7	5	3	15
Percent of total grantees	19%	11%	6%	11%	8%	6%	3%	6%	14%	8%	4%	8%
PBS Mathline	4	3	7	14	0	5	3	8	4	8	10	22
Percent of total grantees	15%	11%	20%	16%	0%	15%	9%	9%	8%	13%	15%	12%
PBS Online	9	6	2	17	3	5	0	8	12	11	2	25
Percent of total grantees	33%	22%	6%	19%	13%	15%	0%	9%	24%	18%	3%	14%
Other computer on-line educational services	10	5	3	18	4	7	2	13	14	12	5	31
Percent of total grantees	37%	19%	9%	20%	17%	21%	6%	15%	27%	20%	7%	17%
Utilization support for teachers using technology	5	2	0	7	2	8	1	11	7	10	1	18
Percent of total grantees	19%	7%	0%	8%	8%	24%	3%	12%	14%	17%	1%	10%

Note: Operating budget size is defined as follows: Small: Less than $2.5 million. Medium: $2.5 to $6.0 million. Large: Over $6.0 million.

Chart V
Highlights of Public Television Educational Activities from the Station Activities Survey
1995-96 Academic Year
Grantees Offering General Equivalency Degree (G.E.D.) Programs
By License Type and Budget Size

	Community Licensees				Institutional Licensees				All Licensees			
Operating Budget Size	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Number of grantees in category	27	27	35	89	24	33	32	89	51	60	67	178
Number of grantees offering G.E.D. program	14	18	17	49	8	14	22	44	22	32	39	93
Percent of total grantees	52%	67%	49%	55%	33%	42%	69%	49%	43%	53%	58%	52%
Median enrollment in G.E.D. program	155	95	448	200	41	85	650	176	100	91	500	200
Total enrollment in G.E.D. program	3,325	6,875	8,294	18,494	308	3,627	28,432	32,367	3,633	10,502	36,726	50,861

Median and total enrollments exclude data for 23 grantees that offered G.E.D. programs but were unable to provide enrollment figures.

Note: Operating budget size is defined as follows: Small: Less than $2.5 million. Medium: $2.5 to $6.0 million. Large: Over $6.0 million.